

Testimony to the Connecticut General Assembly
Government A Subcommittee of the Appropriations Committee
In support of Funding for Early Voting
Public Hearing February 16, 2023

I am writing in support of **funding early in-person voting in the state budget so that voting in Connecticut is accessible, fair and counts.**

My name is Barbara Edinberg and I live in Fairfield. I strongly support early in-person voting parameters ensuring that voting access in CT is expanded; fully funded; and acted upon this legislative session.

Last November, CT voters overwhelmingly voted in support of early in-person voting in Connecticut. As I talked with my neighbors in Fairfield, I learned about the parent who could not vote in the 2021 election because his children were sick. His wife worked fulltime, and he could not leave his children alone. If the state had early voting he could have voted in person over the weekend. I learned about a senior citizen who depended on a family member who could only take her to vote on the weekend. There are many other eligible voters throughout the state who want to vote in-person on Election Day but cannot because of work commitments, disability, childcare and a host of other reasons.

Connecticut must ensure that early voting is **funded and fair**. The costs of implementing accessible early voting should not be burdensome for cities and towns facing economic hardship. Connecticut needs to fund a budget that pays election officials to educate and communicate with voters about early voting. The budget must enable election officials to run voting operations that are safe, secure, and accessible.

Early voting in CT must be **accessible**. I strongly urge early in-person voting that includes early mornings, evenings, and multiple weekends so that CT's 2.4 million voters can vote on their own schedules. The average number of days nationwide is 23. CT should have at least that number of days available for early voting. I also urge multiple early in-person voting locations near public transportation, particularly in our major cities.

Voting must **count**. Connecticut voters have spoken. They want action now. Decisions on the parameters of early voting should be confirmed with fast action, so they can be implemented in 2023 and working correctly in the next federal voting cycle in 2024.

Connecticut's citizens have the right to vote in person. Fund in-person early voting and maximize voter participation. Adopt parameters that make early in-person voting accessible for everyone. Fund it so municipalities will not be economically burdened. Do it this legislative session.

Thank you.

Barbara Edinberg, Fairfield, CT 06825